***Zonal* Railway Committees**

246. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of Zonaj Railway Committees in the country as on date alongwith the names and the number of members of these Committees;

(b) what is the number of meetings of these Committees held during the last three years; and

(c) what are the names of the persons to whom free railway passes were issued during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Arms import by Nepal

247. SHRI KAPIL VERMA;

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a statement made by a Nepal Government spokesman asserting Nepal's right to import arms from whichever country it wanted; if so, what is Government's reaction in the context of 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship;

(b) whether Nepal has made any proposal for changes in the 1950 Treaty; if so, what are the details thereof; and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are being taken to prevent harassment of traders of Indian origin settled in Nepal Terai especially in border areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. Government would be willing to discuss all bilateral issues with Nepal within the framework and the spirit of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

(b) No formal proposal for review of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship has been received.

(c) The Government are keeping a close watch on the situation and are taking all necessary steps to safeguard the interests of Indian nationals resident in Nepal.

Schools covered under 'Operation Blackboard'

248. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the Statewise break-up of the 40,000 primary schools covered under the first phase of Operation Blackboard; and

(b) what are the additional facilities likely to be provided under the Scheme at these schools and what is the total amount spent so far for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER): (a) Under the first phase of the Scheme of Operation Blackboard (1987-88) in all 113417 primary schools were covered. The Statewise details are given in Statement (See below).

(b) The Scheme of Operation Blackboard envisages bringing about substantial improvement in facilities in all primary shools by provision of a 2 room building, an additional teacher in single teacher schools, essential teaching learning material such as toys, games equipment, science kits, library books, musical instruments.